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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at the University of Miami to identify factors that might distinguish between donors and nondonors to the financial support of private universities. The theoretical framework for the study was based largely upon Lecky's self-consistency theory of personality. Three groups of donors and a group of nondonors to the University of Miami were identified. A questionnaire was sent to 272 individuals and 151 usable responses were obtained. A two-group stepwise discriminant function analysis (Fisher) was applied to the questionnaire-generated data. Regardless of whether they were donors or nondonors, respondents perceived themselves as being more generous than other persons. They also perceived themselves as being less influenced by outside forces when making a decision to give money. Profiles for the donor and nondonor groups were developed. Information is presented on attitudes and beliefs about higher education issues, philanthropic views of others and of self, factors that influence decisions to give money to a private university, perceptions and information sources concerning the University of Miami, and demographic characteristics. (SW)

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FACTORS AMONG SELECT DONORS AND NON-DONORS RELATED TO MAJOR GIFTS TO A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

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Institutions of higher education in America are faced with a financial crisis which is mainly due to the inflation and spiraling costs that have plagued the entire national economy. Concurrently, the donating of money to private education by both individuals and foundations has declined sharply, thus causing the financial problems of private higher education to exceed those of the public sector (Magarell, 1976). The Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Need has recommended that scientific methods of investigation -- including the continuous collection of data on the sources and uses of the resources of the non-profit sector -- be used to probe the dynamics of giving in America (AAFRC, 1976). It is hoped that such research might aid in generating knowledge concerning the motivational mechanisms underlying philanthropic behavior and thereby contribute to an eventual increase in both the size of the donor population and the amounts given.

Problem

This study was designed to identify and investigate a number of factors that might prove useful in distinguishing between donors and non-donors to the financial support of private universities. Psychological theory

useful in dealing with both attitude change (Insko, 1967) and motivation for philanthropic behavior (Elrod, 1976) was investigated, and the eventual theoretical framework for the present study was based in large part on Lecky's theory of personality (Lecky, 1951). This self-consistency theory led to the prediction that the willingness of a prospective donor to give money to a particular institution is determined by: 1) the individual's reception of information about that institution from various sources; 2) the integration of such information with the individual's own attitudes and beliefs; and 3) the formation of images that are consistent with the individual's predetermination of what would be accepted as financially supportable. These three theoretical implications were then used to identify the variables to be measured and to construct six hypotheses to be tested.

Method

Three groups of donors to the University of Miami, a private, independent university, were identified. The first of these was comprised of members of the Founders Society (Founders), a prestigious University organization of individuals who had contributed a minimum of $50,000 to the University over a period of five years or less. The second group of donors had previously made a monetary contribution to the University, but the amounts given were viewed as being below the donors' potential to give (Prospects). The third group had also given below their potential as donors, and yet, as local community professionals, had worked to raise money for the University (Citizen Board Members).

A fourth group was identified that had donated neither time nor money to the University (Non-Donors). It should be noted that all members of the last three groups were viewed as prospective Founders Society Members, in that they, too, possessed the potential to make a minimum contribution of $50,000 to the University of Miami. The names and addresses of the 272 persons in these four groups were obtained from the Office of Development at the University of Miami.

The six hypotheses developed were concerned with possible differences between donors and non-donors regarding: 1) attititudes toward selected higher education issues; 2) philanthropic views of themselves and of others as donors; 3) factors which influence decisions to give to any private university; 4) perceptions of characteristics of the University of Miami; 5) source of information concerning the University of Miami; and 6 demographic characteristics. All of these hypotheses were stated in a non-directional way and were multivariate in nature. Six measurement scales were developed, one for each of the dimensions listed above, and, after two pilot test tryouts, these scales were included in a questionnaire which was then sent to the 272 persons in the study sample. In constructing the questionnaire, content validation procedures were stressed rather than correlations with external criteria. Anonymity of respondents was assured in the covering letter, which came from the Office of the President of the University of Miami. One hundred fifty-one (55%) completed and usable questionnaires were returned. This is rather good return rate considering the fact that a member of the questions dealt with issues of a highly personal nature (e.g. annual

salary, religious belief, political attitudes and party preference, reasons for not making a monetary contribution, etc.)

A two group stepwise discriminant fuction analysis was applied to the questionnaire-generated data base to test the hypotheses. This statistical technique, which has been widely used in classification problems, is peculiarly suited to determining how well a team of variables or any subset of the team discriminates between objects grouped by a given criterion (Huberty, 1975). Although the mathematical basis of the two group discriminant function was proposed by R. A. Fisher over 40 years ago (Fisher, 1936), widespread use of this and other multivariate statistical techniques did not occur until high speed electronic computers were generally available. Subprogram DISCRIMINANT of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to implement the analyses (Nie et al., 1975). Since one thrust of this study was to try to distinguish between donors who contribute major gifts to private universities and persons who contribute lesser gifts or nothing at all, the profile of the Founders Society was compared with that of each of the other three groups identified for study. In all, then, four two-group comparisons were made for each of six multivariate dimensions, so that there were a total of 24 discriminant function analyses. The following information was generated for each of the 24 analyses: 1) separation-determination of inter-group significant differences using the Wilk's Lamda criterion; 2) discrimination - group separation with respect to dimensions and to variable contribution to the separation, using Rao's V statistic and change in Rao's V; 3) estimation - obtaining estimates of inter-population differences and degree of

relationships between response variables and group membership; and 4) classification - assigning cases to one of the predetermined mutually exclusive populations based on classification coefficients.

Results

For each of the 24 resulting analyses, there was always some subset of variables (i.e. test items) that made reliable discrimination between the two groups possible. Because of this, all 24 multivariable null hypotheses were rejected using the .05 level of significance. Also, for the 24 2x2 classifcation tables, the percentage of correct classifications ranged from 58% to 83%, the latter percentage being that associated with the donor versus non-donor comparison for demographic variables. Although discriminant analysis, like other multivariate techniques, capitalizes on chance, it is quite apparent that a number of the questions included in the questionnaire were sensitive to group differences.

Regardless of their classification as University donors or non-donors, when questioned about giving in general the respondents perceived themselves as being more generous than other persons. They also perceived themselves as being less influenced by outside forces when making a decision to give money. The outside forces referred to were the stock market, the economy, emergency appeals, awards, plaques, and public recognition. These findings are somewhat unexpected and have implications for the manner in which potential donors should be approached.

Distinct profiles for the donor and non-donor groups were developed.

These profiles reflect attitudes and beliefs concerning higher education issues, philanthropic views of others and of self, factors that influence decisions to give money to a private university, perceptions of the University of Miami, and sources of information concerning the University of Miami. In addition, each profile also reflects age, income, education, political attitude, party preference, and religious belief.

Discussion

The use of the consistency explanation of behavior and motivation, together with Fisher's discriminant function analysis, appears to provide a useful procedure for addressing the problem of identifying potential major donors to a private university. If, for example, a potential major donor differs from a Founder as to his or her sources of information, attitudes toward higher education issues, image of the University, and personal demographics, does it follow that the University should reasonably expect this individual to make a $50,000 Founders pledge? Consistency theory leads us to expect that the answer is "No!". One might therefore conclude that it would be highly desirable to conduct prior investigations and comparative analyses between Founders and prospective donors before engaging in extensive fund raising efforts.

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TABLE 1

SIGNIFICANTLY DISCRIMINATING HIGHER EDUCATION ISSUES RANK ORDERED AS TO THEIR DISCRIMINANT POWER FOR EACH OF THE FOUR COMPARISONS

Item Number	Analysis A - Donors Versus Non-Donors
12	Controversial Issues should be discussed in the class.
7	A university should be a resource for its community.
9	Universities need strong trustee boards.
2	Only those who qualify academically should be admitted.
14	The Federal Government should exercise more control in higher education.
8	Trustees would be highly representative of local community.
13	The faculty should be more accountable for their teaching.
	Analysis B - Founders Versus Prospects
6	There is little difference in quality of private and public education.
9	Universities need strong trustee boards.
11	Most faculty are overpaid for the work they do.
12	Controversial issues should be discussed in class.
2	Only those who qualify academically should be admitted.
13	The faculty should be more accountable for their teaching.
15	Lobbying is a proper function for the university.
	Analysis C - Founders Versus Citizen Board Members
2	Only those who qualify academically should be admitted.
7	Universities should be community sources.
13	Faculty should be held more accountable for their teaching.
	Analysis D - Founders Versus Non-Donors
12	Controversial issues should be discussed in class.
7	Universities should be community resources.
9	Universities need strong board of trustees.
14	The Federal Government should exercise more control in higher education.
2	Only those who qualify academically should be admitted.
6	There is little difference in quality of public and private education.
13	The faculty should be held more accountable for teaching.

TABLE 2

SIGNIFICANTLY DISCRIMINATING PHILANTHROPIC VIEWS RANK ORDERED AS TO DISCRIMINANT POWER FOR EACH OF THE FOUR COMPARISONS

Item Number	Analysis A - Donors Versus Non-Donors
34	Awards and public recognition encourages me to give.
24	My giving is affected by the stock market.
18	I tend to give to universities and churches for the same reasons.
29	Others give to universities and churches for the same reasons.
23	Others give more in response to emergency appeals.
32	I consult an attorney before making large gifts.
	Analysis B - Founders Versus Prospects
24	Awards and public recognition encourages me to give.
19	The stock market influences the giving to others.
29	Others give to universities and churches for the same reasons.
25	I am influenced by the urgency of an appeal.
	Analysis C - Founders Versus Citizen Board Members
17	Awards and public recognition encourages others to give.
30	Others are not influenced by the amount of a university's endowment.
31	Others usually consult an attorney before making large gifts.
34	Awards and public recognition encourages me to give.
	Analysis D - Founders Versus Non-Donors
21	When the economy is weak, I give less.
34	Awards and public recognition encourages me to give.
18	I tend to give to universities and churches for the same reasons.

TABLE 3

SIGNIFICANTLY DISCRIMINATING INFLUENCES ON GIVING TO HIGHER FOUNDATION
RANK ORDERED AMONG DONOR AND NON-DONOR GROUPS

Item Number	Analysis A - Donors and Non-Donors
46	Continuous information mailed to you from the university.
37	Strong administrative leadership.
52	Whether or not a relative attended the university.
38	An active alumni.
49	A visible public relations program.
35	A winning football team.
39	A beautiful campus appearance.
50	Being contacted by a staff member for gift.
	Analysis B - Founders and Prospects
51	Whether or not you attended that university.
45	Presence of internationally known professors on campus.
48	An effective board of trustees.
44	Involvement of the university in the local community.
41	A sound current financial position.
	Analysis C - Founders and Citizen Board Members
41	A sound current financial position.
49	A visible public relations program.
38	An active alumni.
51	Whether or not you attended that university.
50	Being contacted by a staff member for gift.
45	Presence of internationally known professors on campus.
46	Continuous information mailed to you from university.
42	Positive national news coverage.
48	An effective board of trustees.
37	Strong administrative leadership.
	Analysis D - Founders and Non-Donors
46	Continuous information mailed to you from university.
37	Strong administrative leadership.
52	Whether or not a relative attended that university.
38	An active alumni.
49	A visible public relations program.
35	A winning football team.
39	A beautiful campus appearance.
50	Being contacted by staff member for gift.
47	A good reputation in other campus sports.

TABLE 4

SIGNIFICANTLY DISCRIMINATING
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI CHARACTERISTICS
RANK ORDERED AS TO DISCRIMINANT POWER FOR EACH OF FOUR COMPARISONS

Item Number	Analysis A - Donors Versus Non-Donors
68	Staff members making contacts for gifts.
58	Positive local news coverage.
64	Continuous information mailed to the community.
67	A visible public relations program.
61	A highly varied composition of the student body.
65	A good reputation of campus sports besides football.
62	University involvement in the local community.
63	The presence of internationally known professors on the campus.
53	A winning football team.
56	An active alumni association
	Analysis B - Founders Versus Prospects
67	A visible public relations program.
66	An effective board of trustees.
61	A highly varied composition of the studeht body.
54	A good academic reputation.
53	A winning football team.
65	A good reputation of campus sports besides football
	Analysis C - Founders Versus Citizen Board Members
55	Strong administrative leadership.
56	An active alumni association.
68	Staff members making contacts for gits.
53	A winning football team.
59	A strong current financial position.
66	An effective board of trustees
	Analysis D - Founders Versus Non-Donors
64	Continuous information mailed to the community.
67	A visible public relations program.
61	A highly varied composition of the student body.
68	Staff members making contacts for gifts.
65	A good reputation of campus sports besides football.
62	University involvement in the local community.
63	The presence of internationally known professors on the campus.
53	A winning football team.
60	Positive national news coverage.
55	Strong administrative leadership.

TABLE 5

SIGNIFICANTLY DISCRIMINATING
SOURCES OF INFORMATION RANK ORDERED AS TO
DISCRIMINATING POWER FOR EACH OF THE FOUR COMPARISONS

Item Number	Analysis A - Donors Versus Non-Donors
76	Student Activity.
75	Faculty activity.
71	Academic reputation.
69	Football.
77	University finances.
80	Controversial issues.
	Analysis B - Founders Versus Prospects
76	Student activity.
75	Faculty activity.
81	Campus disruptions.
	Analysis C - Founders Versus Citizen Board Members
78	Community involvement.
73	Board of trustees activity.
71	University finances.
79	Needs of the university.
76	Student activity.
75	Faculty activity.
	Analysis D - Founders Versus Non-Donors
76	Student activity.
79	Needs of the university.
75	Faculty activity.
77	University finances.
73	Board of turstees activity.

TABLE 6

SIGNIFICANTLY DISCRIMINATING
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES RANK ORDERED AS TO
DISCRIMINATING POWER FOR EACH OF THE FOUR COMPARISONS

Item Number	Analysis A - Donors Versus Non-Donors
85	I would recommend to a friend to financially support the University of Miami.
98	Respondent's party preference.
82	I am a University of Miami alumnus.
100	Influence of religious belief on donating money to a university.
91	Mother's education.
88	Annual income.
86	I would encourage my son or daughter to attend the University of Miami.
92	Respondent's education.
96	Father's party preference.
90	Father's education.
95	Respondent's political attitude.
	Analysis B - Founders Versus Prospects
90	Father's education.
89	Sex.
82	I am a University of Miami alumnus.
92	Respondent's education.
100	Influence of religious belief on donating money to a university.
99	Religious belief.
94	Mother's political attitude.
91	Mother's education.
87	Age.
	Analysis C - Founders and Citizen Board Members
83	I attended the University of Miami but did not graduate.
92	Respondent's education.
100	Influence of religious belief on donating money to a university.
98	Respondent's party preference.
82	I am a University of Miami alumnus.
84	My son or daughter attends/attended the University of Miami.

TABLE 6 (Cont.)

Analysis D - Founders and Citizen Board Members

85	I would recommend to a friend to financially support University of Miami.
88	Annual income.
86	I would encourage my son or daughter to attend University of Miami.
98	Respondant's party preference.
95	Respondant's political attitude.